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Strengthen Adult SEL Competencies and Capacity

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Promote SEL for Students

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ce Expertise

research and practices, they are able to promote and sustain systemic

quality implementation looks like, WHY it's important, WHEN to engage in e the PROCESS page for step-by-step guidance on how to engage in the pal tools to support your efforts.

central office SEL expertise?

ure that leaders and staff across the district develop a strong knowledge ation methods.

A strong approach to strengthening central office expertise includes:

Providing professional learning that relates to SEL research and practice to central office leaders and staff from all departments. Providing foundational professional learning as onboarding for new staff.

Supporting central office staff in understanding their role in integrating SEL into their area of work and speaking clearly about the value of SEL.

Convening SEL learning communities among central office staff.

Use the Rubric to assess your approach to strengthening central office expertise.

In order to understand their role in integrating SEL into their work and speak clearly about the value of SEL, staff need to understand:

- The framework for systemic social and emotional learning, including the five core social and emotional competencies and how to reinforce these competencies across district, schools, communities, and home.
- The approaches used to foster SEL
- The impact of SEL on academics, behavior, and life outcomes.
- How SEL supports educational equity and inclusive learning environments.
- How SEL supports the district's overall vision and goals.

Why is it important to build SEL expertise in the central office?

The more that leaders in the central office understand the practices and benefits of SEL, the better they'll be able to promote and sustain systemic SEL implementation districtwide. This ensures that SEL is not siloed into a single department or viewed as a stand-alone initiative, but ingrained into all of the district's work.

Leaders who have a solid knowledge base in SEL can also work more effectively to advocate and budget for SEL in the district and in the classroom, and identify specific opportunities within their departments for integrating and promoting SEL.

SEL expertise allows district leaders to:

- Communicate the importance of SEL to schools, funders, students, families, and the community.
- Make strategic and budgetary decisions informed by SEL priorities.
- Identify new opportunities for promoting SEL.
- Embed SEL into various professional learning, resources, frameworks, and guidance.

When should my district begin building expertise in SEL?

Ideally, building SEL expertise is one of the first steps for districtwide adoption of SEL. Begin with core district leaders, including the superintendent, cabinet members, board members, and those who are directly responsible for leading key aspects of SEL implementation. After these leaders have established a foundational level of SEL knowledge to support SEL policy and implementation, you can begin introducing SEL principles and practices to larger groups of central office staff. Deepening expertise in SEL will be an ongoing process throughout implementation, with different timelines and approaches based on staffs' roles and needs.

Who should be involved?

Ideally, your district will support all staff in building a foundational level of SEL knowledge. Some of the district leaders you may wish to prioritize when developing a plan for building and deepening SEL expertise are:

- SEL lead and team
- District school board members
- The superintendent and cabinet
- Instructional leaders and coaches
- Professional learning leaders
- Principal development leaders
- Student behavior and supports leaders
- Key department leaders (such as equity, academics, etc.)
- Principal supervisors
- Human resources staff
- Budget/grants staff
- Union leaders
- Communications leader
- Family and community engagement leaders

Be aware, however, that the same type of SEL development session may not be appropriate for all the staff listed here. Some, like board members, need a higher-level, less practice-oriented understanding of SEL, while professional learning leaders and instructional leaders need more in-depth expertise. Learn more about how to differentiate your development sessions in the Process section.

Focus Area 1

Build Foundational Support and Plan

Focus Area 2

Strengthen Adult SEL Competencies and Capacity

g professional learning about SEL research and practice to enable central ing SEL into their area of work and to speak clearly about the value of SEL. f implementation.

Focus Area 3

Promote SEL for Students

Focus Area 4

Reflect on Data for Continuous Improvement

ill provide strategic support for SEL implementation el of engagement.

iety of central office leaders and staff, not all will need the same level of ment focused on SEL, think about the levels of engagement necessary for

ertise Development Plan template as a starting point for mapping out who to engage and the level of expertise needed. Here is an example of Austin's plan to develop SEL expertise, with differentiated learning plans for staff who are deeply, moderately, and least involved in strategic support for SEL implementation.

2. Design a central office professional learning program that addresses the staff groups you need to reach.

You'll want to ensure you've planned professional learning that reaches leaders and staff from all departments, including foundational professional learning for all new staff. To further strengthen expertise, plan to convene SEL learning communities among central office staff.

There is a range of approaches you may choose to take when designing professional learning to meet the needs of the various groups you identified in Step 1. Reference the planning template and collection of resources as you prepare learning experiences for each group:

- Plan SEL Foundational Learning for your School District
- Strategies and Resources to Support Central Office Expertise
- An Introduction to Social and Emotional Learning this free one-hour course can be taken individually online or facilitated with a small group. It includes videos, application activities, and discussion guides to follow up the initial learning experience.

If you plan to differentiate learning materials by student age to support the learning of leaders who focus on specific grade levels, reference this curated set of articles and videos organized by elementary, middle, and high school levels.

3. Assess how well professional learning prepares central office to support SEL implementation.

To ensure your professional learning program is strengthening central office expertise, you'll want to regularly monitor how well central office staff understand their role in integrating SEL into their area of work and are able to speak clearly about the value of SEL. You may want to administer surveys or conduct interviews to help you collect this information.

Also consider whether key district leaders:

- Advocate for SEL even when dedicated SEL staff aren't present.
- Can explain the impact and value of SEL to any audience.
- Can explain how SEL supports district priorities, equity, academic standards, and quality instructional practices.
- Ask questions about and provide ideas for integrating SEL into their work.

Use this information to differentiate engagement strategies, highlight the voices of the strongest SEL advocates, focus efforts on new leaders and groups who are less conversant about SEL, and improve engagement strategies that have not been effective.

4. Monitor emerging opportunities to strengthen SEL expertise and sustain SEL as a priority for leadership.

As the district landscape changes, new leadership, strategies, and opportunities will call for renewed efforts to ensure SEL remains a priority among district leaders.

- Integrate SEL into conversations with funders, government officials, board members, and other potential supporters.
- Provide leaders with detailed statistics on implementation and metrics on student SEL outcomes in your district.
- Re-engage all leaders in advance of budgetary or strategic planning to keep SEL on the radar.
- Invite leaders to see SEL in action in your district or a district with more advanced implementation.
- Engage new leaders as they join the district or take on new roles.
- Report to the board of education about the district's progress and impact of SEL implementation at least once annually.

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Focus Area 1

Build Foundational Support and Plan

n central office expertise.

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I and planned to strengthen central office expertise

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onal Learning Offerings

eastern Virginia shows how they planned and provided professional learning for all dinvestment, and later build skills, collaborate, and apply SEL in their context. The laks for their staff to sign up for in-person learning or experience an online module.

TAGS staff onboarding

teacher training

professional learning

Fellowship Spotlight - Collaborating on a Vision

SEL Fellow and district SEL leader in New York David Blahowicz describes building a team of SEL champions of teachers and leaders through foundational learning activities and community building. Visit https://casel.org/series/sel-fellows-briefs/ for more briefs from SEL Fellows.

SOURCE:

CASEL

Playbook to Leverage the Power of Communities of Practice

Developed with state policy teams, this resource is designed to support anyone who is working to build a community of practice across multiple schools or districts. Describes 6 steps for building a high quality CoP with tools and examples for each step.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS implementation support

district SEL expertise

SEL leadership

Practices of Promise: Creating a Caring Culture Through SEL in Atlanta Public Schools

How can districts weave social and emotional learning throughout their work to foster a systemwide culture of connection and trust? Atlanta Public Schools saw SEL as a key strategy for rebuilding culture and redefining how to pursue desired outcomes. Learn more about their journey and how SEL is a focus in their offices of safety and security and human resources.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS hiring practices

SEL partnerships

culture and climate

integrate with district priorities

district SEL expertise

2011 to 2021: 10 Years of SEL in U.S. School Districts

Ten years ago, CASEL began collaborating with school district SEL leaders to explore the question - Is it possible to implement SEL systemically to positively impact students across a large urban school district? Not only did districts demonstrate that it was possible, but every district has deepened and expanded SEL implementation since joining the collaborative. This anniversary report details 6 key insights from these districts about how they were able to sustain SEL over the long term, even as the people and contexts within the district changed.

SOURCE:

CASEL

SEL Expertise Development Year 1 Plan

Austin created 3 professional development outlines for leaders needing different levels of learning about SEL, includes links to videos and presentations and discussion questions for each leader audience.

SOURCE: Austin Independent School

District

TAGS SEL partnerships professional learning district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

Find ready-to-use tools for districts

TITLE

SEL Toolkit for School Boards

A quick guide for school board members to help ground SEL conversations in the best interests of students and families, including tools to dispel misinformation with facts and data, then take action to support the social, emotional, and academic learning of every child.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS school board board policies community relations

Find ready-to-use tools

TITLE

An Introduction to SEL online course

CASEL's free, one-hour, virtual learning experience includes reflection prompts, videos, and application activities to introduce SEL to staff members, caregivers, community partners, or anyone interested in SEL.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS Adult SEL teacher training communications professional learning

Plan SEL Foundational Learning for your School District

This tool can help SEL leaders prepare a broad plan to provide learning experiences for all stakeholders in the school district community, and access resources to support foundational learning about SEL.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS teacher training professional learning family and community engagement

Playbook to Leverage the Power of Communities of Practice

Developed with state policy teams, this resource is designed to support anyone who is working to build a community of practice across multiple schools or districts. Describes 6 steps for building a high quality CoP with tools and examples for each step.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS implementation support district SEL expertise SEL leadership

Guiding Questions for Educators: Promoting Equity Using SEL in your School

When social and emotional learning (SEL) is implemented with a culturally responsive lens, educators can use SEL to cultivate equitable learning opportunities, responsive relationships, and inclusive practices. This resources features reflection questions for school-level educators to explore the CASEL core competencies through an equity lens.

See also: Guiding Questions for Educators: Promote Equity Using SEL in your District

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS cultural competence Adult SEL equity culturally responsive

SEL 101: What are the core competencies and key settings? (video)

How can you bring social and emotional learning to your community? CASEL's framework for social and emotional learning (SEL) takes a systemic approach, identifying five core competence areas and four key settings.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS videos SEL overview professional learning

Group Reflection Protocol for SEL: Discussing the Core Competencies and Where They Are Promoted

This reflection protocol can help you facilitate a discussion on the updated SEL framework in small or large groups. The prompts allow you to think about what CASEL's updated SEL framework means for implementation efforts in your school, district, or other setting.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS SEL overview professional learning building buy-in for SEL

Recommended Videos

This list contains links to videos that can be used to introduce SEL, strengthen commitment, and discuss key topics with stakeholder groups. Videos are arranged by category and length.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS videos

SEL for Educators Toolkit

A presentation template, companion guide, mini-modules, summary, and reference list for use in PLCs, staff meetings, professional learning, or individual reflection. Contains suggested activities and practices to support educators in their well-being, emotional state, and stress while supporting students.

SOURCE: Transforming Education

TAGS Adult SEL toolkit professional learning

Michigan's Free Online SEL Training

The Michigan Department of Education in partnership with Michigan Virtual offers 5 self-paced courses (available to all but credit awarded only to MDE certificate holders) including an introduction to SEL, culturally responsive classrooms, embedding SEL schoolwide, creating professional culture based on SEL, and trauma-informed support.

SOURCE: Michigan

DOE

TAGS Adult SEL trauma culturally responsive professional learning

The Impact of Social and Emotional Learning (video)

The research is clear: SEL is essential for academic and life success. In this video, district and CASEL leadership highlight data that demonstrates improvements in attendance, drop out rates, suspensions, expulsions, and academic growth.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS videos define SEL metrics continuous improvement building buy-in for SEL

What is Social and Emotional Learning? (video)

From CASEL and school district leadership, this video conceptualizes social and emotional learning and describes what it looks, feels and sounds like in educational spaces.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS videos SEL overview building buy-in for SEL SEL leadership

Strategies and Resources to Support Central Office Expertise

There are a range of approaches you may choose to take when designing professional learning to meet the needs of the various groups you identified as stakeholders. In this document you'll find a few approaches and resources.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS professional learning integrate with district priorities district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

SEL: Creating Safe & Supportive Learning Environments (video)

Creating a safe, supportive environment for social and emotional learning (SEL) has been, and remains, a high priority for CASEL. It is inherent in our focus on integrating SEL into all aspects of school and district practice through a systemic approach.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS videos SEL overview district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL SEL leadership

Cross-District Visit Observation Tool (Sacramento)

This observation tool was used at CASEL's 2019 Cross District Learning Event in Sacramento. It highlights the intersections of SEL and equity goals in Sacramento City Unified School District.

SOURCE: Sacramento City Unified School

District

TAGS equity school visit/observation tool

Cross-District Visit Observation Tool (Chicago)

This observation tool was used at CASEL's 2018 Cross District Learning Event in Chicago. It highlights the 4 domains of Chicago's School Climate Standards.

SOURCE: Chicago Public Schools

TAGS school visit/observation tool

Guiding Questions for Educators: Promote Equity Using SEL in your District

When social and emotional learning (SEL) is implemented with a culturally responsive lens, educators can use SEL to cultivate equitable learning opportunities, responsive relationships, and inclusive practices. This resources features reflection questions for district-level educators to explore the CASEL core competencies through an equity lens.

See also: Guiding Questions for Educators: Promote Equity Using SEL in your School

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS cultural competence Adult SEL equity culturally responsive

Recommended Readings for Staff

Recommended Readings for staff development. Topics include Introducing the Importance of SEL, SEL and Equity, SEL and Academic Integration, Restorative Practices, Adult SEL, and Partnering with Families for SEL. (Within each topic, readings are listed in order of length)

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS reading lists - staff district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

Central Office Expertise Development Plan

You can use or adapt this template as a starting point for planning how to develop central office expertise by audience.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS professional learning integrate with district priorities district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

What does SEL look like in elementary, middle, and high school?

This curated list of articles and videos illustrate what SEL looks like in elementary, middle, and high school settings. Explore these links to deepen your knowledge and find grade-differentiated resources for professional learning and planning.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS middle school grades high school grades elementary school grades

SEL 3 Signature Practices introductory video - Adult SEL

Video describing the SEL 3 signature practices (welcoming inclusion activity, engaging practices, and optimistic closure) and how to use them in settings with adults, such as a meeting or professional learning.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS PLC mindfulness three signature practices videos self awareness SEL coaching for staff building community professional learning district SEL expertise

SEL Learning Walk Protocol - Anchorage

Anchorage's protocol for preparing and facilitating learning walks, well suited for districts that are organizing cross-campus visits to exemplary classrooms.

SOURCE: Anchorage Public

Schools

TAGS model SEL schools school visit/observation tool conducting local SEL research classroom level building buy-in for SEL

RELATED RESOURCES

SEL Learning Walk Observation Tool - Anchorage

Anchorage's handout for observers to take notes after visiting a classroom during a Learning Walk.

SOURCE: Anchorage Public

Schools

TAGS model SEL schools school visit/observation tool conducting local SEL research classroom level culture and climate professional learning district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

Personal SEL Reflection

Principals, administrators, SEL team members, staff members, and other adults can use this tool to assess personal strengths, think about how to model those strengths when interacting with others, and plan strategies to promote growth across areas of social competence.

SOURCE:

CASEL

Find presentation templates that you can adapt and use

TITLE

SEL for Educators Toolkit

A presentation template, companion guide, mini-modules, summary, and reference list for use in PLCs, staff meetings, professional learning, or individual reflection. Contains suggested activities and practices to support educators in their well-being, emotional state, and stress while supporting students.

SOURCE: Transforming Education

TAGS Adult SEL toolkit professional learning

Presentation to the Austin ISD Board

CASEL and district SEL leaders co-led this three hour experiential session with the Board to strengthen and formalize support for SEL. Facilitator notes include a link to presentation slides.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS Adult SEL school board building buy-in for SEL

SEL Administrator Academy: Implementing Social and Emotional Learning Systemwide to Improve Student Achievement

Presentation for district and school administrators to connect SEL standards with Common Core and workforce skills and how to implement/monitor district-wide SEL. Includes activities that model SEL and a full presenter script.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS board policies SEL overview implementation plan college and career readiness

professional learning integrate with district priorities district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

SEL leadership

Social and Emotional Learning in the Daily Life of Classrooms

Facilitator guide and materials for a 6 hour session aimed at state and district leaders, outlining ways to integrate an SEL emphasis into policy and planning, draw connections between SEL and instructional priorities, and support school leaders to guide teachers to reflect on their own teaching practices and SEL competencies.

SOURCE:

AIR

TAGS Adult SEL CCSS professional learning integrate with district priorities district SEL expertise

The Case for SEL sample presentation

CASEL's presentation introducing SEL and its evidence base can be adapted for a range of audiences, including district leaders and potential community partners or funders.

SOURCE:

CASEL

Sample Schoolwide SEL 101 Presentation

This presentation can be adapted and used to introduce SEL to staff, families, and community partners. It gives an overview of what is SEL, why it's important, and the process for schoolwide SEL. Talking points and activity instructions are provided in the notes section. Also available in Spanish.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS three signature practices staff onboarding SEL overview classroom level culture and climate professional learning district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL SEL leadership

RELATED RESOURCES

Sample Schoolwide SEL 101 Presentation (Spanish)

Slides and presenter notes are in Spanish -- This presentation can be adapted and used to introduce SEL to staff, families, and community partners.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS spanish language resources family and community engagement

See artifacts shared by districts and schools

TITLE

SEL Action Guide - District Professional Learning Offerings

This example from a school division in southeastern Virginia shows how they planned and provided professional learning for all district staff to strengthen understanding and investment, and later build skills, collaborate, and apply SEL in their context. The original version of this document included links for their staff to sign up for in-person learning or experience an online module.

TAGS staff onboarding teacher training professional learning

Classroom SEL Message Map

This example comes from a school division in southeastern Virginia. These key messages and supporting points can be used by classroom teachers to describe how and why they integrate SEL into their classroom, or can be shared as a summary with classroom teachers as the basis for staff discussion.

TAGS teacher tool communications family and community engagement

Fellowship Spotlight - Collaborating on a Vision

SEL Fellow and district SEL leader in New York David Blahowicz describes building a team of SEL champions of teachers and leaders through foundational learning activities and community building. Visit https://casel.org/series/sel-fellows-briefs/ for more briefs from SEL Fellows.

SOURCE:

CASEL

Sacramento SEL Board Training

Sacramento's presentation to the Board, sharing evidence of effectiveness of SEL implementation at pilot sites.

SOURCE: Sacramento City Unified School

District

TAGS school board budgeting fundraising SEL overview implementation plan college and career readiness professional learning integrate with district priorities district SEL expertise

SEL Central Office Professional Learning Community Description

Sacramento's overview and invitation to other central office departments to participate in a district-level SEL professional learning community.

SOURCE: Sacramento City Unified School

District

TAGS Adult SEL implementation support PLC SEL partnerships professional learning integrate with district priorities district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL SEL leadership

RELATED RESOURCES

SEL Central Office Professional Learning Community Save The Date

Half sheet flyer for Sacramento's 4 session central office SEL professional learning community.

SOURCE: Sacramento City Unified School

District

TAGS Adult SEL implementation support PLC SEL partnerships professional learning district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

SEL Central Office Professional Learning Community Agenda

An agenda from Sacramento's SEL professional learning community for central office staff to better align district departments to improve adult practices and student SEL outcomes.

SOURCE: Sacramento City Unified School

District

TAGS Adult SEL implementation support PLC SEL partnerships professional learning district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

Campus Visits and Learning Walk Protocols (Austin)

Guidelines for SEL coaches when they conduct supportive visits and a protocol for Learning Walks, shared with visitors and campuses so they know what to expect and what support is available to them.

SOURCE: Austin Independent School

District

TAGS implementation support SEL coaching for staff model SEL schools school visit/observation tool conducting local SEL research implementation monitoring instructional practices

Demonstration Sites Walkthrough Tool (Sacramento)

Tool used to make notes about SEL integration into the schoolwide environment, classroom environment, and instruction.

SOURCE: Sacramento City Unified School

District

TAGS implementation support SEL coaching for staff model SEL schools school visit/observation tool conducting local SEL research implementation monitoring instructional practices

Find resources to help you learn more on this topic

TITLE

The Neuroscience of SEL (Video)

20 minute lecture by Richard Davidson on the neuroscience of emotions and emotional response, and how SEL trains and changes the brain. Best for educating SEL leaders or building buy in with audiences looking for a scientific basis for SEL.

SOURCE:

Edutopia

TAGS Adult SEL mental health videos research brief teacher training evidence-based programs professional learning district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

Integrating Social-Emotional Learning into State and District Policies

Powerpoint and webinar covering how districts have incorporated SEL through curriculum and standards.

SOURCE:

AIR

TAGS school board SEL standards board policies integrate with district priorities SEL leadership

How to Create a Professional Learning Community

Edutopia article on developing strong PLCs, includes quick tips on teaching participants how to collaborate, creating an atmosphere of trust, carving out enough time for meaningful work, and more.

SOURCE:

Edutopia

The Positive Impact of Social Emotional Learning for Kindergarten to Eighth-Grade Students: Executive Summary of Three Scientific Reviews

Findings in this summary of 3 large-scale research reviews of K-8 SEL programs show that SEL is among the most impactful youth development support for school-age youth, and it can be incoprorated into routine educational practice.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS journal article reading lists - staff define SEL metrics evidence-based programs out of school district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

Book Chapter: Social Emotional Learning: Past, Present and Future

Chapter by Weissberg, Durlak, Domitrovich, and Gullotta that provides a framework and evidence base for SEL and also important factors for quality implementation.

SOURCE:

CASEL

TAGS implementation support reading lists - staff research brief SEL overview evidence-based programs district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

Students with Strong Social Skills in Kindergarten More Likely To Thrive As Adults

Short article describing a 20 year study connecting students' social skills in kindergarten to their well-being as adults.

SOURCE: Robert Wood Johnson

Foundation

TAGS reading lists - staff SEL competence research brief evidence-based programs district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL

<u>Social-Emotional Competence: An Essential Factor for Promoting Positive Adjustment and Reducing Risk in School Children</u>

Medium length scientific journal article (Domitrovich, Staley, Durlak, and Weissberg, 2017) reviews research behind SEL and what is known about effective intervention approaches, and proposes an intervention model to promote resilience.

SOURCE: Research

Journal

TAGS journal article reading lists - staff SEL competence evidence-based programs district SEL expertise building buy-in for SEL